

THE GRAMOPHONE

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EDITORIAL

FOR some time past I have had in my head a scheme that requires much thought before it can be considered a practical scheme. Now, it will not be worth while wasting time on the elaboration of it unless I have an assurance beforehand that a sufficient number of people like the idea to give it their support. Briefly, my ambition is to incorporate a number of enthusiasts for good music on the gramophone in a society which will aim at achieving for gramophone music what such societies as the Medici have done for the reproduction of paintings and for the printed book. In order to obtain the best music for the gramophone, it is only necessary to persuade the recording companies that there is an articulate body of potential buyers of records, clamouring for the best and willing to pay for it.

The first step is obviously to get the names of those who would become members of such a society, if it were started, with an annual subscription of five shillings : and I ask my readers to send me a postcard to 25, Newman Street, W.1, in the following terms : " I am willing to join the proposed Society and to pay five shillings a year if it is started. I suggest that it should be called The.....," with name and address.

If I receive 500 postcards I will take the next step, which will be to start the society and give it a name. The Apollo Society has been suggested, but I do not much like it. I think it would be a mistake to use the name of any one great composer, for that would give a wrong impression of our object and character ; but I am sure that some more ingenious mind will discover the obviously right name. The main object of the society will be to find out by the votes of the members what works we require most urgently to be recorded ; and I should hope that we could agree among ourselves upon one complete symphony, two complete works of chamber music, and one complete concerto a year. Supposing that this involved 20 records, we should then have to obtain a guarantee that every member would buy the records ; and with this guarantee we could approach the recording companies and ask them to what extent and on what terms they would meet our wishes.

It is a hazy scheme, but anyone can see the possibilities of development in it ; and if the initial response to this feeler of mine is as great as I expect it to be, my readers may rest assured that I shall leave nothing undone that I can do to get to work promptly on the scheme.

Compton Mackenzie

A Musical Autobiography (continued)

By Compton Mackenzie

MY dramatic interest was completely satisfied by *Tannhäuser*, but I did not get any emotional uplift out of it. Even to this day, with rare exceptions, I do not enjoy music emotionally; I think that I enjoy it for the way it occupies the waste ground of the mind. I should be inclined to say that for as many people as find church music emotionally satisfying there are at least as many others who can pay attention to prayer because their idle and vagrant thoughts are being occupied by the music. I shall return to this discussion later on when I come to speak of the use to which I have put music as an aid to literary composition. At the time of which I am writing, and for some years before and after, I was finding in Swinburne's poetry all I required emotionally. I had a pirated American edition, which contained in one volume nearly all the poet had written. Wherever I went that light blue volume went with me; and if anybody had suggested to me that I could get from Chopin what I got from Swinburne I should have laughed. I wonder what is the emotional fodder of adolescence at the moment. There is certainly nothing in contemporary English verse that could feed emotionally any youth of sixteen or seventeen, and the young men of the War period were forced into a premature self-expression like hyacinths in glasses that flower feebly ever afterward, or they were like accumulators charged by the War, and, now that active service is over, are worn out. Well, whatever may be the emotional catharsis of the modern young man, I wish him as much joy from the process as I had from Swinburne.

It was about this period that my first musical friends grew much excited over Tchaikovsky, and I well remember trying to discover the magic that was evidently distilled for them from the Sixth Symphony (H.M.V. D.713-717). It seems incredible to me when I look back at myself in those days that there really was once a period in which with complete sincerity I could say that I perceived no melody anywhere in the Sixth Symphony of Tchaikovsky; I seem to be confessing that about this time I was unable to perceive that sugar was sweet. How well I remember, on a dripping grey morning in February, a genuine Tchaikovsky morning, going to see an Irish friend of mine who was studying to be a professional pianist, and sitting patiently while he played over and over again the opening whine of the Sixth Symphony. I can hear him now.

"Do you mean to say you can't hear that it's a melody?" he cried, using every moment a richer brogue.

I shook my head.

"It's an affectation," he cried, "to pretend you like the *Waldstein Sonata* and say that you can't recognise the melody in that."

And off he went again, playing the phrase over and over with one hand in the treble. But it was no affectation. I was being perfectly sincere in declaring that I could not perceive the melody. That was in 1900; and I spent all the summer of that year in the heart of France, where I read more than 200 Tauchnitz novels and listened to the grasshoppers. But I never heard a note of music.

When I went up to Oxford, I had the inestimable advantage of finding myself in a musical set; but out of perversity, or simply because I was still actually unable to enjoy music, I gained nothing from my association. I would not join the Oxford Musical Club, where I should have heard good chamber music once a week; I would not go to Balliol Sunday evening concerts; I would not take advantage of the visits of great artists to Oxford. All this time music was just a bore. I remember that one somewhat musical friend of mine was always asking another of my very musical friends to play him the *Pomp and Circumstance March* (H.M.V. D.179), and I remember the friend who was always being asked protesting at being made the exponent of such a cheap piece of melody, and I remember wondering to myself how on earth he arrived at finding something in which I could perceive no melody at all so obvious as to be cheap; but my heart was hardened and I was content to go on disliking music and taking no trouble to like it.

It is humiliating when I write these words to look back to that Oxford period and ponder on the wasted time and lost opportunities so far as music was concerned, because my perversity and silly complacent ignorance can never really be made up for by any amount of concentration now. It was the same with singing, which I could tolerate even less patiently than instrumental music. I suppose that the moment was not ripe, and it is idle to lament not having taken advantage of what did not exist. It is only now, when I try to reconstruct my musical life, that I perceive in what a desert I existed.

The only reminiscence worth recording of this period was of meeting Donald Tovey at lunch during Eights week, and of leaving soon after lunch because he was playing Beethoven sonatas to an enraptured audience; of returning to tea to find him still there,

and of hearing with relief the proposal to go down and see the first division row at six o'clock, and then of finding that Donald Tovey was to come too. I can see him now crossing the High and conducting an imaginary orchestra as he walked along, and I can see disapproving undergraduates with their relatives and friends turning round to stare at him in the sunlight of a May afternoon. I can remember wondering why we should be plagued with a musical genius during Eights week and if it would not be possible to stop his making such an exhibition of himself by conducting an imaginary orchestra and tooting to himself like a cracked French horn, and I recall my embarrassment and dismay when the ghostly *scherzo* he was conducting involved an unusual energy of movement and he nearly conducted a young woman's hat off her head as we passed along towards the barges. It is really lamentable that the whole of my musical life at the University should consist in retrospect of being bored by *Pomp and Circumstance* played on the piano, and of being bored by Donald Tovey's behaviour in public. I can remember picking up from a musical friend's mantelpiece a programme of the Oxford Musical Club and thanking God, with a shudder, that I was not like these musical people on reading that some trio or quartet of Beethoven would be the tit-bit that week.

Then I remember going up to Cambridge during the Long Vacation to play in a dialogue of Thomas Heywood, called *Worke for Cutlers*, which had been discovered in the library of Trinity Hall. The parts were Rapier, Sword and Dagger. I played Rapier, and carried a genuine rapier of Elizabethan times, a tremendous weapon to manage gracefully, for it must have been more than 6ft. long. We performed the piece as a Pastoral in the Hall garden, and to help out the stilted old dialogue Mr. Dolmetsch was there with his orchestra. I believe that I was genuinely enchanted by the music, which was all of the period, and I was certainly enchanted by the antique instruments like the viola d'amore and viola da gamba, and the lute. When I got back to Oxford the following term I announced to my friends that at last I had discovered what I really liked in music; and I begin to wonder nowadays if some of my would-be extremely musical friends who affirm that they can only stand Bach are not really in the same development of musical taste that I was in when I was twenty, because so often when they are tackled one finds that they are not really musical, and that the pleasure they claim to be getting from Bach is only the pleasure of literary association, the same kind of pleasure that I got, and still get, from a pre-Raphaelite painting. Of course I am not referring to people who, having experienced all music, return at last to Bach; but I am always suspicious of perfect taste that has not been reached

by leagues of bad taste. I do not believe that, unless one has at some time or another revelled in Macaulay's *Lays* or Longfellow's *Psalm of Life*, one can possibly enjoy the best poetry, except as snobs may enjoy the company of earls, or parvenus the best vintages of champagne. The way beauty reveals itself to mankind is the way the sun comes in winter-time, shedding for a brief moment a few pale rays, touching with indescribable magic the cold scene, and a moment afterward retiring behind a grey waste of clouds. Most of us have perceived in early youth the beauty of a line of poetry that is definitely one of the great beautiful lines in the literature of the world; but why that particular line should have been appreciated when others equally beautiful were passed over unheard by the imagination it would puzzle more than a Freudian to discover. And so with music; most of us can look back to something in great music that moved us before we were really moved by all great music as a matter of course; my own example would be that *Incaratus* from the Mozart Mass.

The fatal thing that happens to so many people in the adventure of taste is the way they find that they suddenly like something which they remember was considered good some years before they liked it. What can I take as an instance? Let us say Rubinstein's *Melody in F*. Perhaps at an early age they have heard Rubinstein's *Melody in F* on the violin or violoncello or piano and were bored to death by it, whereas their parents or guardians hummed it on the way home from the concert. Ten years later, in their turn, they find themselves enraptured by the *Melody in F*, and in a burst of self-congratulation they fancy that they have achieved something and reached a landmark in their intellectual progress, and from that moment they are sorry for anybody that cannot be enraptured by Rubinstein's *Melody in F*. It is the same in literature and painting. For one's own pleasure I am sure that it is a mistake to have exquisite taste in all the arts. For the rest of my life I intend to be quite impenitent about music and painting, and never to allow myself to get beyond works of art that still delight me, though I know them to be far removed from the first rank. I have reached a standard in judging poetry which is like the top of a mountain above the level of perpetual snow in its discouraging and monotonous perfection. I pick up volumes by contemporary poets whom I have heard praised by people who ought to know better. I gather a handful of poems and carry them up to my mountain-top to compare them with the snow at the summit. But the artificial snow I have gathered melts in my hand long before I reach the summit. Yet what a great deal of harmless pleasure might be mine if I had worse taste and was not firmly convinced that great English verse died with Shelley. Even now, such power have day-

dreams to beguile the fancy, I sometimes picture myself at my bookseller's and there picking up on the counter some small volume and opening it and perceiving on the very first page an authentic line of great verse; I picture myself taking it home . . . but this is folly. Only the other day I opened one of our literary magazines and read a beautiful little poem. I was so excited that I went everywhere, inviting people to come and read it, assuring them that at last there was a good poem in the ——. But when I had gathered a dozen unbelievers for this miracle, alas! it had a simple and natural explanation, for on turning the page I found that the poem had been reprinted from an Elizabethan manuscript. The poem was good enough, but the poet had been dust ages ago.

I found the same thing about gardening. I reached a point in gardening when the sight of a border of the latest delphiniums depressed me as much as the county of Surrey. The appearance of any rose except a natural species, of any tulip except a natural species, of any crocus except a natural species, made me feel ill. I revolted against my good taste, and I spent several years in trying to get back my bad taste in flowers, and now, thanks be to the merciful elasticity of Providence, I can once more enjoy tea roses and groups of delphiniums.

I do not fancy that I shall ever lose my bad taste in music, although I regret to say that I am beginning to find Puccini impossible. This is a sad business, and I grow to like Bach better and better every day. These remarks are out of order at the present moment. I ought still to be writing about a period when Puccini seemed to me as remote from any likelihood of ever being able to enjoy him as now seems Scriabine or Stravinsky.

When I left Oxford I went to live at Burford, where I spent a year in strict seclusion, only broken by going up to Oxford to rehearse and act in *The Clouds* of Aristophanes. The music for this was written by Sir Hubert Parry, and I believe that it contained some delightful parodies on modern music to accord with the spirit of Aristophanes' mockery of contemporary taste. It may have been my inability to appreciate the point of that music—that and the personalities of Sir Hubert Parry himself and of Sir Hugh Allen, who was looking after the chorus—which made me wonder if it were not time that I applied some of my diversified energy to acquiring a taste and knowledge of music. I remember Sir Hubert Parry coming in to have tea with me one dusky afternoon. He was motoring down to Gloucestershire and stopped in Burford on the way. He sat down suddenly at the piano and began to play what I think must have been a skit on the music of Debussy's *Pelléas and Mélisande*—or was that written by 1904? I know that we had been talking about Maeterlinck and that I had read him part of a parody

I had just written, at which he had laughed heartily, something about the Princess Migraine and the Princess Phenacetine and Prince Cocaine, in which one of the characters had said portentously, "I think there will be a blue moon to-night," followed by a stage direction in brackets [*A blue moon rises*]. It was so cold in the hall of Lady Ham that Parry would not take off his fur coat, but sat thumping away on the piano and roaring with laughter at some musical joke which, of course, I could not understand. It struck me then how kindly he had laughed at my jokes about Maeterlinck, and I felt ashamed that I could not appreciate *his* jokes. I believe that this was the actual moment when I decided that I had got to learn something about music. What a delightful man he was, and it was so surprising to hear somebody who looked and talked like an Admiral eloquent about music and literature. I wish I could tell this story better, but I have only the pictorial memory of his appearance to give, and if I had appreciated his musical joke what a much better story it would have made. *Verbum sapienti*, if any wise young man reads this paragraph. A friend of mine (he was George Montagu in those days) had taken another little house close to mine at Burford and had imported the instrument, now I believe almost extinct, known as an *Æolian*. To listen to the *Æolian* being played was a torture; but I am sure that to play it, especially if one studied the rolls of music with the score, would teach one a good deal more about music than a pianola, which, after all, is not much good except for piano music. I was alone most of the time, for George Montagu only came down for week-ends, and I spent all my afternoons and evenings playing this instrument myself. It happened that there were complete rolls of the Third and Fifth Symphonies of Beethoven, and of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies of Tchaikovsky. Before that winter broke to spring I knew them backwards. That opening whine of the *Pathetic Symphony* with the vox humana stop pulled out would have moved a heart of stone. And to think that four years ago I had not perceived that yearning melody! It really is incredible. There was another roll which I played over dozens of times, Tchaikovsky's *Slav March* (H.M.V. D.123). I can still hum that through from beginning to end.

The *Eroica Symphony* (Col. L.1447-1448-1449) was not so good on the *Æolian* as the *C Minor* (H.M.V. D.665-668), and to this day I have never enjoyed the *Eroica* as much as the *C Minor* which, as I played it over and over again on that ridiculous instrument, changed my whole musical outlook; and when in the following autumn I heard it played for the first time by an orchestra at a Promenade concert, it changed, I believe, my whole outlook on art and life. How this came about I will write about next month.

EPIGRAMOPHONES—I.

By HILAIRE BELLOC.

*Oppressed of years the Human Organ grows
Less pleasing—as the Prima Donna shows.
The gramophone escapes our common curse.
Bad to begin with, it becomes no worse.*

Some Gramophones and Sound-Boxes

THE TEST OF ENDURANCE

THE light-heartedness with which Englishmen enter upon a strenuous campaign was never better exemplified than by the trio who undertook the test of Gramophones, sound-boxes and needles at the suggestion of the Editor. It sounded so simple, so valuable, so interesting. You just put a number of gramophones of various makes in a room decorated with sound-boxes and needles, sat in an armchair and listened with judicious alertness to the nuances of tonality, definition, etc., etc., of the different combinations of machines and accessories, till you had made notes which would be of inestimable value to all gramophone users. It would of course take time, but it would be as pleasant as testing the vintages of a rich cellar.

However, the professional wine-taster is a hard-bitten, morose and usually dyspeptic man, as little affected by the illusion of pleasure as the professional tea-taster or the professional wool-taster. And as these gramophone tests proceed, I seem to see the same set look of confirmed disillusionment forming upon the faces of my colleagues James Caskett and F. Sharp. I see it forming as they sit in shirt-sleeves scribbling in notebooks while the August sun makes and breaks its own Winner records, and the closed windows of the room keep out the noise of Oxford Street traffic and convert the salon into an oven; and I think of our readers in cool gardens, in seaside bungalows, in shady backwaters, listening in great contentment to perhaps the same music played on the same gramophones and saying, as they put down their tumblers, "I wonder what those people on The Gramophone will say about this old noise-box next month. Anyhow, it's good enough for me, and I can't afford to buy another one."

That is the difficulty. If no gramophone cost more than five pounds and no record more than a

shilling, we should all very soon be satisfied that we possessed the finest machine and the least imperfect library possible. But most of us have made our choice and cannot go back on it, at any rate till the income tax comes down; most of us are not energetic enough to choose the most suitable out of half-a-dozen sound-boxes for each particular record, or to have every kind of needle within reach. We are ready to believe that with discrimination we can get a truer and fuller re-creation—as Mr. Edison would call it—of a singer's voice; but is it so much truer and fuller than what we get with a minimum of trouble as to be worth the effort? Not indolence nor indifference this, but a genuine doubt. We do not want to waste time fiddling over illusory improvements.

Then, too, there are the differences between individual machines of the same make to be considered, the condition of the motor, the size of the room in which the tests are made; not to mention the temperamental vagaries of sound-boxes, the equal adjustments of needles, records and speed. I would wager that my two colleagues often wondered, as I did, whether our honest endeavours to come to fair and unprejudiced decisions were not doomed to suffer from distracting and devilish obstacles which we could not avoid. But still, if we did sometimes wonder why we were cooped up in a heat-wave for an enterprise of doubtful value, at other times we were aware of a very real progress in our own gramophonal education. At the very outset, for instance, we started on the Scotney record of *Caro Nome* (Voc. A. 0191) and had tried it on Orchestraphone, H.M.V. and Algette before it was suggested that we ought to try it on a cheap gramophone as well in order to see exactly where blasts occurred or where the cheaper machine failed. No sooner said than done: a new six-guinea Decca was

brought upstairs, and to our amazement it reproduced that exquisite voice more brilliantly than any of the others and nearly as richly as the Orchestraphone. Blasts, tinniness, weakness! Not a trace of them—the result was good enough for anyone to hear and enjoy. We were delighted by this gallant, this almost aggressive, triumph of the little Decca; and when it proved to be short-lived—when, that is to say, we tried it with a big orchestral piece—we marked it down to its humbler sphere with a genuine regret.

I must explain about that “no sooner said than done” before I go any further. We were able to procure a Decca within two minutes of wanting it because our tests were taking place at the Gramophone Exchange, 29, New Oxford Street, where Messrs. Russell & Walters had with their usual courtesy put a room at our complete disposal and supplied us, as far as they could, with every kind of machine, record, sound-box or needle that we required. Nothing that we suggested seemed to be too much trouble for the indefatigable Mr. Walters, and he spared no pains—he and his engineer—in making sure that the machines were in perfect order for a fair test. It might be thought that THE GRAMOPHONE, in order to preserve its integrity of judgment, should have avoided any suspicion of accepting favours from any one particular maker or dealer. But we will ask our readers to believe that we ran no risks in accepting this hospitality. We ran no risk of saying that the Orchestraphone was a fine machine because Messrs. Russell & Walters make the Orchestraphone and we were their guests. We ran no risk of describing the Astra as the perfect sound-box because it is advertised in our columns by the Gramophone Exchange. We were immune from this risk, inoculated—in a word, prejudiced. We were all previously of the firm opinion that the Orchestraphone fitted with an Astra sound-box is at its price the best machine that we had heard, and as its price is somewhat higher than that of the other machines which we proposed to test, we omitted it from the tests. We were not surprised to hear from Mr. Walters that the Blüthner Piano Company is arranging to put the Orchestraphone on the market under another name. We had therefore no compunction in making use of the facilities afforded to us at the Gramophone Exchange, and our readers, if they will consider the pros and cons of the situation will agree with us that we did wisely.

Our method of tabulating the results of our tests is to put opposite the name of each sound-box and gramophone the number of marks we consider that it earns out of a possible ten for its general good behaviour towards each record. It is evident that such marking represents a merely personal preference, to an even greater extent than most questions of taste; but nevertheless we hope that though no one who had been present during the tests might entirely

have agreed with us—and we didn't always entirely agree among ourselves—yet enough people of taste would have agreed in the main with our judgments to show that these judgments were not simply arbitrary. The list of marks will be followed by a few remarks on the behaviour of the instruments.

LIST OF RECORDS USED

- (1). ORCHESTRA. Albert Hall Orchestra, *Siegfried's Funeral March* (Wagner). H.M.V. D.502.
- (2). CHAMBER MUSIC. Lener Quartet, *Molto Allegro from Quartet in G Major* (Mozart). Col. L.1460.
- (3). PIANO. Max Darewski, *In an Eastern Garden*. Zonophone, A.271.
- (4). VIOLIN. Jascha Heifetz, *Ronde des Lutins* (Bazzini). H.M.V. 2-07962.
- (5). 'CELLO. Pablo Casals, *Air for "G" string* (Bach). Col. 7138.
- (6). SOPRANO (*Coloratura*). Evelyn Scotney, *Caro Nome* (Verdi). Voc. A.0191.
- (7). CONTRALTO. Dame Clara Butt, *In questa tomba oscura* (Beethoven). Col. 7265.
- (8). TENOR. Michele Fleta, *Ay, Ay, Ay* (Perez). H.M.V. 2-062009.
- (9). BARITONE. Riccardo Stracciari, *Eri tu che macchiavi quell'anima* (Verdi). Fonotipia C.92621.
- (10). BASS. Chaliapin, *Song of the Volga Boatmen*, H.M.V. 2-022016.

SOUND-BOXES

This is dangerous ground. Our correspondent “Sussex” in our last issue (p. 61), after guarding himself against adverse criticism by declining to argue about matters of taste, poured out the fruits of his experience in short paragraphs of cornucopia, and in effect said that with a Superphone, Lenthall, Ultone, 3in. Astra, H.M.V. Exhibition with flex diaphragm and H.M.V. No. 2—all to be kept locked up when not in use—a man might consider himself adequately equipped to deal with any record. On the other hand, we have expressed the intention more than once of testing a sound-box for three months before venturing to give an opinion upon it. And yet here we are adventuring, in spite of C. S. R.'s warning against blind alley occupations on p. 75, into the task of comparing seven sound-boxes and trying to come to conclusions which will be of value to our readers. It is illogical, like many of the bravest actions in history; it is almost a forlorn hope, but it is worth doing because the sound-box is the most important part of a talking-machine and, since the recording of music is being rapidly improved, the ability of sound-boxes to respond to this improvement is a matter of vital interest; and also because it is only by the accumulation of experiments and tests and opinion that a right judgment can be arrived at.

The sound-box and the needle should be close allies, not merely partners in a hollow *entente cordiale*. They should combine against the record to extract from it the maximum of musical reparations. It is as ineffectual for the needle to plough its way through the grooves, extracting vibrations at the cost of irreparable damage to the record, as it is for it to skim lightly along the grooves and expect the sound-box to respond with enthusiasm. Our object must be to extract the maximum possible from the record with the minimum of damage to the grooves, and to transmit that maximum as accurately as possible to the diaphragm. Apparently it is a question of compromise. A heavy sound-box presses too heavily on the record, a light one fails to extract the subtleties of reproduction. A sound-box with a large diaphragm gets a fuller tone, but blurred; a sound-box with a small diaphragm sacrifices mellowness to brilliance. All sound-boxes are made on the same principle and, apart from the question of weight and size, the differences mainly lie in the material used for the diaphragm and in the method by which the stylus is placed upon its fulcrum. It stands to reason, therefore, that the expert will aim at devising the perfect all-round sound-box, but that he will generally push his discoveries forward till he obtains a nearly perfect result from a particular kind of record, while failing to meet the requirements of other kinds. Just so in cricket; even the all-round expert has his favourite strokes, his favourite place in the field, his favourite condition of wicket. And experience shows that even the best all-round sound-box, though able to deal adequately with every record, excels miraculously with certain particular records or class of records. If you study the technique of the sound-box and of the needle, you will very soon realise that the same combination cannot logically give the fullest value to both a record by a military band and to a pianoforte record. Therefore it must be possible, by a patient analysis of results from many experiments, to arrive at the conclusion that on any given gramophone a certain record or class of records is given its fullest effect by a combination of such-and-such a sound-box with such-and-such a needle. Even allowing for the temperament of a sound-box and the temperament and ear of a listener—even allowing for the acoustic properties of "baronial halls" and "new-poor dwellings"—conclusions of broad value should be attainable; and it is upon the basis of this argument that these tests have been made.

In order to narrow the tests to a reasonable range, we have decided to use one machine for all the sound-boxes, and to use the same records for testing both the sound-boxes and the gramophones. At first we intended to use the Orchestraphone for testing the sound-boxes on, but it was not found very easy to fit different sound-boxes to it, and in

the end we decided on the H.M.V. machine. But should we put one record on the machine and try each sound-box in turn on it, or should we put on one sound-box and try each record on it in turn? We decided to adopt the former method, though it was the more laborious; and in actual practice we dodged about a good deal and tried a variety of experiments which generally helped to clear up doubts—and sometimes only made the fog thicker.

LIST OF SOUND BOXES

The sound-boxes at our disposal were:—

- (1) The ASTRA, model 4, price 2 guineas, made for Messrs. Russell and Walters, 29, New Oxford Street, W. 1. Diaphragm 3in., weight 5 oz. Takes either steel or fibre needles.
- (2) The B.R.O.S., price 2 guineas, made by Mr. A. J. Rice, 133, London Road, Brighton. Diaphragm 3in., weight 3½ oz. Takes either steel or fibre needles.
- (3) The HIS MASTER'S VOICE EXHIBITION. The Gramophone Co., Ltd. Diaphragm 2in., weight 5 oz.
- (4) The HIS MASTER'S VOICE No. 2, made by the Gramophone Co., Ltd. Diaphragm 2½in., weight 5 oz. Takes either steel or fibre needles.
- (5) The LENTHALL, price £3, made by Lenthall Gramophones Ltd., 51, Fountain Street, Manchester. Diaphragm 2½in., weight 4½ oz. Takes either steel or fibre needles.
- (6) The SATURN, price 10/6, made in Germany for the Talking Machine Cies. Diaphragm 2in., weight 4½ oz. Takes either steel or fibre needles.
- (7) The SONAT, price 27/6, made by Messrs. Alfred Graham & Co., 25-26, Savile Row, London, W. 1. Diaphragm 2½in., weight 4½ oz.

TESTS OF SOUND-BOXES

ORCHESTRA (*Siegfried's Funeral March*). H.M.V. loud needle: Astra, 7; B.R.O.S., 7; H.M.V. Exhibition, 5; H.M.V. No. 2, 7; Lenthall, 9; Saturn, 5; Sonat, 7.

The Lenthall gave an extremely faithful reproduction of the orchestral colour; the brass was exceptionally good. We had feared that the B.R.O.S. owing to its lightness would fail to bring out the detail, but it was surprisingly good in this respect. It fell below the Lenthall principally in the reproduction of the brass. The Sonat resembles the B.R.O.S. somewhat, but was better in the brass. The Astra was particularly good in the bass, but was probably not very well suited to this particular gramophone. The H.M.V. No. 2 gave a very different reproduction from the B.R.O.S. and the Sonat, a rather hard and tight quality of sound, whereas the others were looser and more refined. The music seemed rather too much for the H.M.V. Exhibition and the Saturn to cope with. These two latter instruments are as alike to look at as two peas and very much alike in quality. The Saturn is evidently a German edition of the Exhibition.

PIANO (Max Darewski). H.M.V. soft tone needle: Astra, 8; B.R.O.S., 8; H.M.V. Exhibition, 6; H.M.V. No. 2, 9; Lenthall, 7; Saturn, 8; Sonat, 8.

The H.M.V. No. 2 was the most successful with the piano. The Astra, the B.R.O.S., and the Sonat gave somewhat similar results, the B.R.O.S. being particularly good for the bass. The Saturn was surprisingly good and left the H.M.V. Exhibition behind.

VIOLIN (Heifetz). H.M.V. medium needle: Astra, 8; B.R.O.S. 9; H.M.V. Exhibition, 5; H.M.V. No. 2, 7; Lenthall, 7; Saturn, 7; Sonat, 7.

Both the Lenthall and the Sonat were a trifle blurred. The B.R.O.S. was exceptionally clear and gave a beautiful reproduction of the violin tone. The H.M.V. Exhibition gave a poor tone.

LO (Casals). Columbia medium-tone needle: Astra, 8; B.R.O.S. 9; H.M.V. Exhibition, 5; H.M.V. No. 2, 7; Lenthall, 9; Saturn, 7; Sonat, 9.

The B.R.O.S. and the Sonat resembled one another very much, and were in sharp contrast to the Lenthall. It is, however, difficult to say that the reproduction was better in one case than the other. There is something very agreeable in the looseness of the former two. The Lenthall has a much severer quality. The Astra was particularly good for the lowest notes of the accompaniment.

CHAMBER MUSIC (Lener Quartet). Columbia medium-toned needle: Astra, 10; B.R.O.S., 9; H.M.V. Exhibition, 6; H.M.V. No. 2, 8; Lenthall, 10; Saturn, 6; Sonat, 9.

The best discrimination of the instruments from one another was given by the Lenthall. The Astra was almost as good in this respect and the tone was rather sweeter. The B.R.O.S. and the Sonat were as usual very much alike. No detail was lost by either. The H.M.V. No. 2 gave great brilliance.

SOPRANO (Scotney). Vocalion needle: Astra, 7; B.R.O.S., 9; H.M.V. Exhibition, 4; H.M.V. No. 2, 8; Lenthall, 8; Saturn, 5; Sonat, 8.

There was a particularly charming loose, open quality in the voice as reproduced on the B.R.O.S. The H.M.V. No. 2 and the Lenthall were almost as good but the voice was not quite so sweet. The Sonat resembled the B.R.O.S. pretty closely. The Astra was excellent for the detail but a trifle harsh.

CONTRALTO (Dame Clara Butt). Columbia medium needle: Astra, 7; B.R.O.S., 9; H.M.V. Exhibition, 5; H.M.V. No. 2, 8; Lenthall, 7; Saturn, 7; Sonat, 8.

There is not very much to be said about the results of the contralto test. The B.R.O.S. seemed rather to smooth out the difference of quality in the different registers which to many is so unpleasant a feature in contralto records.

TENOR (Fleta). H.M.V. medium needle: Astra, 8; B.R.O.S., 9; H.M.V. Exhibition, 6; H.M.V. No. 2, 7; Lenthall, 7; Saturn, 8; Sonat, 9.

The B.R.O.S. and the Sonat were very sweet though not very loud. The Saturn was surprisingly good, and resembled the H.M.V. No. 2 but gave a more agreeable tone. The H.M.V. No. 2 was very brilliant but the result was a little overpowering. The Astra was very full but lacking in subtlety.

BARITONE (Stracciari). H.M.V. medium needle: Astra, 8; B.R.O.S., 9; H.M.V. Exhibition, 4; H.M.V. No. 2, 5; Lenthall, 7; Saturn, 8; Sonat, 8.

Stracciari's voice is one which on this instrument is very apt to prove too much for the sound-box, and a great deal of vibration is likely to occur. The H.M.V. No. 2, which usually will take anything, failed here conspicuously. The result with the Lenthall was heavy. The B.R.O.S. and the Sonat were as usual light and elegant.

BASS (Chaliapin). H.M.V. medium needle: Astra, 10; B.R.O.S., 6; H.M.V. Exhibition, 7; H.M.V. No. 2, 8; Lenthall, 7; Saturn, 7; Sonat, 7.

The surprising thing in this test was the failure of the B.R.O.S. to cope with Chaliapin's voice. There was a distinct lack of body throughout, though the last faint notes of the song were good. By far the best result was given by the Astra which gave a beautiful open tone and reproduced the last notes well. With the Saturn the last notes were very faint; the tone was good though it sounded somewhat throttled. Both the H.M.V. boxes gave adequate renderings, especially No. 2.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

A sound-box is an instrument that is extremely sensitive to weather conditions. The quality of sound from a mica diaphragm might almost be used by anyone with a sufficiently sensitive ear as a barometer. It will then not be beside the point to repeat that these tests were made during the recent heat wave and represent the performances of the instruments under its influence. Doubtless it would have been preferable to have made the tests under different weather conditions and to have compared the results, but time was limited.

The B.R.O.S. is a sound-box that none of us had heard before. As will be noticed from the description it is very large and very light. It is probably this combination of size with lightness that gives it a peculiarly sweet and refined tone. There is a certain looseness in the sound that is particularly agreeable with some records. The Sonat though heavier and smaller often resembled it closely in tone. The Astra is probably not suited to any machine that has not a large amplifier.

The Lenthall being entirely of metal is probably less influenced by weather conditions than any of the others. It is exceptionally good for Chamber music.

The H.M.V. Exhibition did not do very well in the tests and we are all surprised at the result. It must be remembered that sound-boxes are delicate instruments and it may well be that the particular example we used was not in perfect condition. We did not consider it part of our duties to adjust any of the instruments before testing them. We put ourselves in the position of ordinary members of the public who might be supposed to go into a dealer's and buy a sound-box across the counter and use it just as they found it. It is true that some enthusiasts take a delight in "tinkering" with sound-boxes and machines, and get a principal part of their pleasure from gramophones out of such "tinkering," like some motorists who regard a motor car almost more as an object capable of being taken to pieces than as a means of locomotion. Most of us, however, prefer to have the mechanical work done by the manufacturers, and trust them to give us something as nearly fool-proof as may be. It is possible that the Exhibition box has a constitution peculiarly sensitive to heat waves. We feel that in fairness to this instrument, we must say that our previous impressions of it were much more favourable, and that although for most records we have always preferred the No. 2, yet for some things, notably for piano records, the Exhibition has been found distinctly superior.

GRAMOPHONES

In consulting the following tests of gramophones it must be noted that in most cases the needle used was that which would presumably be chosen by the manufacturer of the record, while the sound-box was that supplied by the maker of the gramophone. Possibly these could have been replaced with advantage by, for instance, a Petmecky needle and a Nom-y-ka sound-box (about which we hear for the first time from our correspondent E.S.G. on p. 72 of this issue). Possibly independent research has produced a needle and a sound-box definitely preferable to those recommended by the record and gramophone makers. This may transpire hereafter, but for the present it is obviously only fair to those gramophone makers whose wares we are comparing to test them under their own chosen conditions.

From time to time we receive letters from our readers asking us for advice in the purchase of a new gramophone, and are hard put to it to give an answer which will satisfy them as well as ourselves. But these reports on practical tests will probably prove to our readers how necessary it is for the individual to form his own judgment after due deliberation in the music saloon of his local dealer, after taking, for

what they are worth, the opinions of the local dealer—who may have other than merely æsthetic reasons for his opinions—and those of THE GRAMOPHONE, which does not by any means claim to pronounce judgment *ex cathedra*.

LIST OF GRAMOPHONES TESTED

HIS MASTER'S VOICE Cabinet Grand Model—in mahogany, with No. 2 sound-box. £22 10s. (The Gramophone Co.)

ORCHORSOL Cabinet Table Grand Model C.8, with the new wooden tone-arm. £19 10s. (The Orchorsol Gramophone Co.)

ALGRETTE dark oak Cabinet, with Sonat sound-box and "Gramolith" tone arm. £15 15s. (Alfred Graham & Co.)

CLIFTOPHONE Model 6 in oak, with Garrard double spring motor and twin reed Cliftophone sound-box. £10. (The Chappell Piano Co.)

DECCA, compressed fibre portable. £6 6s. (The Decca Co.)

Note.—It will be observed that this is hardly a representative list of different makes. It was intended to try eight or ten machines of about the same price, but when the time came it was by no means easy to collect them all in one spot. A Kestraphone arrived just too late for inclusion, and the promised Itonia and Tretone Separaphone never turned up at all. The inclusion of a Decca has already been explained. Next month we hope to use our experience for a better organisation of the Portable tests.

TESTS OF GRAMOPHONES

ORCHESTRA (*Siegfried's Funeral March*). Algrette, 7; Cliftophone, 9; Decca, 5; H.M.V., 6; Orchorsol, 8.

The Cliftophone gave the best reproduction of the orchestra. The tone of the Orchorsol was very clear and agreeable. The H.M.V. machine sounded choked and the tone was rather harsh. The Decca made the orchestra sound like a brass band, though it reproduced the detail pretty well.

CHAMBER MUSIC (Lener Quartet). Algrette, 8; Cliftophone, 7; Decca, 6; H.M.V., 8; Orchorsol, 8.

The tone of the Orchorsol was as usual very sweet, and though not so rich and full as that of the Cliftophone we agreed in preferring it. For reproduction of detail and discrimination of their tone qualities there was little to choose between the more expensive instruments. It is on this question of the discrimination of the instruments that portable gramophones like the Decca show their principal shortcoming; the strings sounded on the Decca much more like brass.

PIANO (Darewski). Algrette, 7; Cliftophone, 7; Decca, 6; H.M.V., 8; Orchorsol, 8.

The great trouble with piano records is the banjo-like twang which is emphasised more on some instruments than on others. The Orchorsol and the H.M.V. machines were the most successful in reducing it. No doubt by the use of other needles and sound-boxes this twang could have been reduced still more, but it did not enter into the scheme of these tests to try all possible combinations of machine, needle and sound-box. Any references to combinations outside our present scheme are the result of previous unsystematic experimentation, a thing that often leads to happy discoveries. The editor in the course of trying over some old piano records hit on the combination of an Ultone sound-box with a Sympathetic Chromic needle, and we have been unable to discover anything else so good.

VIOLIN (Heifetz). Algrette, 7; Cliftophone, 9; Decca, 7; H.M.V., 8; Orchorsol, 7.

A violin, like a soprano voice, is extremely easy to reproduce—modern records of either of these instruments may be regarded as practically gramophone proof. The Cliftophone was astonishing in the faithfulness of its reproduction, and the little Decca quite adequate.

'CELLO (Casals). Algrette, 8; Cliftophone, 7; Decca, 7; H.M.V., 8; Orchorsol, 7.

All the machines tested were apt to give a smothered sound to the 'cello. That this was not the fault of the record was shown by playing it on the large Orchestrphone, when the tone came out beautifully round and open. The Algrette and the H.M.V. machines suffered least from this tendency.

SOPRANO (Scotney). Algrette, 8; Cliftophone, 9; Decca, 8; H.M.V., 8; Orchorsol, 8;

The results of this test are substantially the same as those of the violin record. The man whose taste runs exclusively to *coloratura* and violin records is to be envied; he need spend no sleepless nights wondering what machine he shall buy and after he has bought it what sound-box and what needle he shall use. With reasonable care he will get a good result whatever machine or sound-box he uses. Of all the machines, no matter of what size or price, we are inclined to think that the Vocalion gives the very finest results with *coloratura* voices, but we have not tried it under test conditions.

CONTRALTO (Dame Clara Butt). Algrette, 8; Cliftophone, 7; Decca, 7; H.M.V., 8; Orchorsol, 8.

There was not very much difference in the results of these tests. The Cliftophone exaggerated the difference in quality of the registers of the voice.

TENOR (Fleta). H.M.V. Medium Needle. Algrette, 8; Cliftophone, 7; Decca, 6; H.M.V., 5; Orchorsol, 9.

The Orchorsol was exceptionally free from any "gramophonic" quality, and its tone was extremely sweet. The H.M.V. machine was unable to cope with this record and the result was penetrating and harsh, to the point of being unbearable. The Cliftophone gave more volume of tone than any of the others.

BARITONE (Stracciari). H.M.V. Medium Needle. Algrette, 6; Cliftophone, 9; Decca, 7; H.M.V., 5; Orchorsol, 8.

Stracciari's voice is evidently rather a test for a gramophone's capacity. The Algrette and the H.M.V. machines were defeated by it, the latter rather disastrously. The vibration was extremely unpleasant. The Cliftophone and the Orchorsol were superb, and to our surprise the Decca, which we had thought would be impossible, showed itself perfectly competent to deal with the situation.

BASS (Chaliapine). H.M.V. Medium Needle. Algrette, 6; Cliftophone, 9; Decca, 6; H.M.V., 5; Orchorsol, 7.

The Cliftophone gave immense volume and very good quality, and the reproduction of the last faint notes of the song was perfect. The sweetness of tone that is so striking a property of the Orchorsol, and is no doubt chiefly due to the wooden tone-arm, did not give it the same advantage as with some other records. With the Decca, as was expected, the sound was rather thin, but what there was of it was agreeable and open.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It must be remembered that, as in the case of sound-boxes, these tests were all made during the recent heat wave and that some instruments are affected more than others by weather conditions. The Cliftophone certainly gave a very remarkable performance. We have heard the machine accused of giving a sound lacking in body, but our experience of it was exactly the reverse. Considering its size it gave a noticeably full, rich sound, competing indeed in this respect in one or two records with the vast Orchestrphone itself. The Orchorsol and the Algrette are on the whole sweeter and it is on this point that they score sometimes over the Cliftophone.

The H.M.V. machine failed on male voices and on the orchestra. Its tone with these records was inclined to be lifeless and there was often a good deal of vibration, otherwise its performance was uniformly good.

The Decca is hardly intended for the more exacting records, but in its more limited sphere it was excellent. For dance and band records its performance is admirable, and though its tone is not enormous, it seems to carry exceptionally well.

YET ANOTHER SOUND-BOX

THE RESULT OF A TEN-YEAR STUDY OF SOUND-BOXES

A member of the Bristol Gramophone Society sends us the following article on behalf of his Society. We have not had the opportunity of hearing the sound-box to which he refers.

IN response to your invitation to readers of THE GRAMOPHONE to give their experiences of various Sound-Box and Record combinations, I venture to challenge the statement of your contributors that certain boxes must be used for special types of recorded music.

This, I know, is the opinion of the H.M.V. Company, who use a mica diaphragm, but, as a member of a little coterie of enthusiasts in the West Countree, we must lay it down as a result of exhaustive tests, that mica, vulcanite, hornite, celluloid, tortoise-shell, ivory, bone, wood, glass, or any other combinations thereof are quite *déclassé* to-day.

Apart from the latest Edison disc combination, which is a special floating diamond upon a unique type of record, and causes a considerable surface hiss, although giving a supremely natural effect on "vocals," our very best results for *all kinds* of needle-cuts have been obtained from an entirely new departure, manufactured by the Jewel Phonoparts Company, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A., which they call their Nom-y-ka diaphragm.

This seems to be similar in texture to the Edison basis, and after six months' continual use bears out their claim of improving in tone, volume and musical quality generally, and is especially true on the difficult "ensemble" records.

Its sole drawback is that it heightens all faults—i.e., is kind only to "perfect" records, although diminishing surface noises in a surprising manner, and on the new Columbia wax must be heard to be believed.

It is a complete mystery to me that the English companies are so blind to the faults of the "ever-lasting tin" of mica; indeed the managing director of our largest "musical" emporium in Bristol says that the public (poor dears!) like the Gramophone tone (with whine and nasal quality complete) and would not buy anything sweeter or more natural!

Personally, I never want to hear a mica box again, and my musical friends, who have hitherto shown but lukewarm liking to recorded melody, now frequently call and amuse me by criticising the actual playing of the various great artists through the horn.

Apart from this Jewel Sound-box, the next best is a fibrose diaphragm manufactured by Mr. Seymour, being of a vulcanised fibre texture, but this seems more adapted to orchestral records, especially H.M.V., and it is doubtful whether the fibre can retain its resiliency, in which case the vulcanite would take upon itself to give us its usual whinneying tone.

We pray that the English Columbia Company, who have given us so many thrills of delight with their wonderful records this year, may now also scrap their old system of mica-making and turn out some of these beautiful new diaphragms.

E. S. G.

LIST OF SELECTED RECORDS—IV

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D.592.—Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Landon Ronald. Prelude to *Tristan and Isolde* (Wagner).

COLUMBIA.—D.1443, D.1444.—London String Quartet. Hornpipe Quartet (Haydn).

COLUMBIA.—L.1359.—William Murdoch (Piano). Hark, Hark, the Lark (Schubert-Liszt). Gavotte, from *Paris and Helena* (Gluck-Brahms).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—4-7961.—Kreisler (Violin). Songs my Mother Taught Me (Dvorak-Kreisler).

COLUMBIA.—7255.—Casals ('Cello). Nocturne in E Flat (Chopin).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—E.204.—Violet Gordon Woodhouse (Harpsichord). Sonatas in A Major and D Major (Scarlatti).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—2-053135.—Galli-Curci (Soprano). Ah! non credea mirarti, from *La Sonnambula* (Bellini).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—2-3376.—Culp (Contralto). Virgin's Slumber Song (Max Reger).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—052121.—Caruso (Tenor). M'appari tutt'amor from *Marta* (Flotow).

FONOTIPIA.—C.92621; C.92622.—Stracciari (Baritone); Eri, tu chi macchiavi, from *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Verdi). Il balen del suo sorriso, from *Il Trovatore* (Verdi).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—2-022016.—Chaliapin (Bass). Song of the Volga Boatmen.

COLUMBIA.—E.844.—Cantor B. Woolf (Tenor). Berosh Hashonoh; Hineny Heony.



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- L1164 { Scherzo, from Trio, in "F" (*Gade*)
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(*Tschaikowsky*)
- L1169 { Trio No. 2, in "G" major—Finale. (Op. 1, No. 2) (*Beethoven*)
- L1198 { Andante, from Trio in "F" major (Op. 18) (*Saint Saens*)
- L1198 { Walzer-Marchen 3—Allegro vivace (*E. Schull*)
- L1225 { Extase (Reverie) (*Louis Ganne*)
- L1225 { Miniatures: (a) Minuet No. 1; (b) Hornpipe, No. 8 (*Frank Bridge*)
- L1324 { Beethoven Trio III, in "C" minor: Andante cantabile (with variations)
- L1343 { Seguidillas Gitanas (*Fernandez Arbos*) (Op. 1, No. 3)
- L1343 { Aubade d'Avril (*Eugene Lacroix*)
- L1343 { Gipsy Rondo, from Finale, Trio No. 1 (*Haydn*)
- L1343 { Mendelssohn Trio (Op. 66)
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- L1232 { (c) Andante with variations (Part 2);
- L1232 { (d) Finale
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- L1232 { Part 1.—Allegro; Part 2.—Adagio molto espressivo;
- L1232 { Part 3.—Scherzo (Allegro molto);
- L1232 { Part 4.—Rondo (Allegro ma non troppo)

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GRAMOPHONE SOCIETIES' REPORTS

THE WEST LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY

THE monthly meeting of the society took place on August 8th at our headquarters, Holy Cross Schools, Ashington Road, S.W. Two demonstrations were given, one by Mr. J. A. Smith and the other by Mr. C. L. Hunter, both programmes being sufficiently diversified to suit all tastes. Among the records in Mr. Smith's demonstration particularly noted were *The Beggar's Opera* Selection, Grenadier Guards (Col.); the old-time favourite *My Old Kentucky Home*, Alma Gluck (H.M.V.); *Adelaide*, Tudor Davies (H.M.V.); and *Si vous l'aviez compris*, Caruso & Elman (H.M.V.). A record of *Caro Nome*, Eugenie Bronskaja, did not compare favourably with other renderings of this famous air. In Mr. Hunter's programme, an otherwise good rendering of Tosti's *Parted*, by Hubert Eisdell, was marred by the violin obbligato; therecording of *Liebslied*, by Rachmaninoff, was not everything that could be desired; but mention must be made of *The Hiawatha Ballet Suite*, Coldstream Guards (H.M.V.), and *Fireflies Ballet Suite*, Regent Symphony Orchestra (Vocalion). Peter Dawson, the popularity of whose records it is needless to dwell upon, was very much in evidence during the evening, Mr. Smith giving *Largo al Factotum* and *The Toreador Song*, Mr. Hunter *Land of Delight* and *Up from Somerset*. A hearty and deserved vote of thanks was given to both demonstrators.

W. H. E.

CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY

ON July 26th the programme consisted of a joint display of records lent by Messrs. Noding & Sessions. The titles worth special mention were *Menuet* and *Valse Bluette*, by Kathleen Parlow; *Faust Overture*, by H.M. Irish Guards; *Fantasie sur Rip*, Garde Républicaine; *My Song shall be always Thy Mercy* and *Venetian Song*, Alan Turner. During the evening Mr. Sessions demonstrated his special reproducer. Mr. Hillyer had some interesting remarks to make upon the record of *Quartette from Rigoletto* (1528). He said that he had heard all the leading disc records of this title—several made by celebrated artists—but the Blue Amberol cylinder easily came out on top. The meeting was in complete agreement with this opinion.

FELIX SYKES,
Recording Secretary.

THE BRIXTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY

IN the August number of THE GRAMOPHONE the question of the issue of more complete chamber works played by eminent artists was raised. When listening to the Lener Quartet in the *Molto Allegro* movement of Mozart's *Quartet in G Major*, this question was brought vividly to mind. But are the various companies to blame? Let us acknowledge to our shame that chamber music is possibly the least known form of any to the masses, and it is really most creditable that such a good amount is available at all, whether in snippets or in several movements. What do we see when we come to large orchestral works, such, for instance, as the *C Minor* and *Pathétique Symphonies* and the *Emperor Concerto*, issued in eight and ten parts? The writer has heard authoritatively of isolated discs being purchased, simply on account of some pleasing theme contained therein; a more ignorant proceeding can scarcely be imagined. If the public insisted on complete books every time, they would get them—and pay for them—but it means a tremendous lot of spade work to wean them from the bestiality of their fruitarian and negroid diet. Let us be thankful for what we have, and trust that sanity will one day produce even one Mozart Symphony, and perhaps a cycle of Schubert's songs. To return to the subject of these lines after such a digression it remains to say that Dame Clara Butt's record of *In the Chimney Corner* and *Pimen's Monologue* from *Boris Godounov*, rendered by Chaliapine, although so dissimilar in every

respect, are worth attention, the first by reason of its clarity of diction, and the latter for its dramatic intensity—excellent records in every way. It is not possible, owing to considerations of space, to review the other items, but the whole programme is appended for its general interest.

(1) Orchestra, *Symphonie Pathétique* No. 6, in *B Minor* (Tchaikovsky), Royal Albert Hall Orchestra; (2) piano, *Sonata in C Sharp Minor*, op. 27, No. 2 (*Moonlight*) (Beethoven), F. Lamond; (3) band, *I Puritani* (Quartet), Vessella's Band; (4) tenor, *Te quiero* (Jota) (Serrana), Michele Fleta; (5) string quartet, *Molto Allegro, Quartet in G Major* (Mozart), Lener Quartet; (6) baritone, *I Love a Lassie*, Sir H. Lauder; (7) 'cello, *Menuet* (Gluck), W. H. Squire; (8) soprano, *Cavatina* (Ernani), F. Hempel; (9) violin, *Légende*, op. 17 (Wieniawski), E. Zimbalist; (10) contralto, *In the Chimney Corner*, Dame Clara Butt; (11) bass, *Pimen's Monologue* ("Boris Godounov"), T. Chaliapin; (12) duet, *Lassù in Ciel* (*Rigoletto*), Battistini and Moscisca.

M. V. W., for Recording Secretary.

RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY

THE usual demonstration of recent issues provided by Messrs. Benstedts was given to a large gathering of members and friends on July 2nd, and the members' meeting was held on the 16th, when excellent programmes of well-chosen records were demonstrated. Mr. N. E. Jones opened with (1) H.M.V., *5th Symphony*, 3rd movement, R.A.H.O.; (2) H.M.V., *Salve dimora* (*Faust*), Gigli; (3) Fono., *Il Balen* (*Il Trovatore*), Stracciari; (4) Fono., *Non conosco il bel suol* (Mignon) Stracciari; (5) Col., *Celeste Aida* McCormack; (6) Fono., *Caro nome* (*Rigoletto*), Finzi-Magrini; (7) Fono., *Cielo e mar* (*La Gioconda*), Anselmi; (8) H.M.V., *In questa tomba oscura* (Beethoven), Chaliapin; (9) H.M.V. *Siciliana* (Cav. Rust.), Caruso; (10) Fono., *Eri tu* (*Un Ballo in Maschera*), Stracciari; (11) Fono., *Addio del passato* (*Traviata*), Finzi-Magrini; (12) Fono., *Che gelida manina* (*La Bohème*), Anselmi. During the interval Mr. Adams was presented with a handsome dinner service as a wedding present. Miss C. A. Morris contributed the second part of the programme of H.M.V. records: (1) *To Spring* (Greig), Kreisler; (2) *Ballatella* (*Pagliacci*) A. Gluck; (3) *Spirito gentil* (*La Favorita*), Gigli; (4) *Now sleeps, the crimson petal* (Quilter), K. Lunn; (5) *Kreutzer Sonata* (Beethoven), Bourne & Hayward; (6) *Ah! fors'è lui* (*Traviata*), Melba; (7) *Death of Boris* (Moussorgsky), Chaliapin; (8) *Printemps qui commence* (*Samson et Delila*), J. Culp; (9) *Voi lo sapete* (Cav. Rust.), Galski. Mr. W. S. Rowe will give the whole of *The Mikado* on August 13th, when any enthusiastic gramophonist will be heartily welcomed.

[Held over from our last issue.—Ed.]

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY

ALTHOUGH the general meetings are suspended during the summer months, a small coterie of enthusiastic members—who for some time past have been assembling monthly for a more intensive and extensive study of all that pertains to the gramophone—are continuing their meetings meanwhile. These small gatherings have not hitherto been reported, and it is not intended—as a matter of custom—that notes of the proceedings shall be published.

But the meeting held on Wednesday, May 27th, furnished so much interest and enjoyment that a few remarks may not be considered out of place. The Liverpool Society has been much indebted to the local gramophone dealers for their invariable courtesy and assistance, and to none more so than to the enterprising house of Messrs. Davis, of the Arcade, Lord Street. On the evening under review Mr. Cyril Davis demonstrated with conspicuous success a number of the later Columbia recordings. A great deal of interest has been evinced of late in the new Columbia issues, both on account of the high standard of the works recorded and also by reason of the general excellence of the discs them-

selves. A very noteworthy and undoubted improvement is to be observed in the richness and fullness of the tone, but the most outstanding feature is without doubt the very marked diminution of the surface scratch, the hiss or grate of the needle being almost entirely absent. What faint sound is perceptible is soft and not unpleasant, being somewhat in the nature of the gentle crackling emitted by the electric spark.

Several of the July issues are of unusual excellence. The *Fingal's Cave Overture*, by the New Queen's Hall Orchestra, is quite remarkable for its tone-colour and the spirit of the work has been captured in a most telling and sympathetic fashion. In the pianoforte records by Mr. Wm. Murdock there is a noticeable and uncommon robustness of tone in the bass and the playing shows distinction and delicacy in conception and interpretation. The selection from *The Pirates of Penzance*, by the Grenadier Guards, is quite up to the standard one is led to expect from this fine band, and is marked by some beautiful and effective playing by the basses. A record that made an immediate appeal was that of the flute and clarinet duets by Robert Murchie and Haydn Draper (*Tarantelle*, Saint-Saëns, and *Serenade*, Pfyffer), and quite a large proportion of the audience placed orders for copies of this disc.

It is interesting to learn that the Columbia Company have arranged to supply both new recordings and selections already catalogued in the new finish and material. Some of the older recordings are already available in their new guise, and all are excellent. In some cases perfectly new recordings have been made of instrumental selections, and in several instances the violin part has been undertaken by Mr. Arthur Catterall (vice Mr. Albert Sammons), and, in the opinion of the writer, this has resulted in an even more delightful and balanced performance. Mr. Catterall possessing in a rare measure those talents which render him peculiarly fitted for this class of work. Our thanks are hereby tendered to Mr. Davis, to whom we feel grateful for having rendered a service which leaves us much in his debt.

J. W. HARWOOD,
Recording Secretary.

CITY OF LEEDS GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY

THE July meeting, held Thursday, July 19th, in the Parochial Room, Mark Lane, was given by one of the members, Mr. Swallow, and consisted of a demonstration of the Pemberton-Billing apparatus and World Records, Vice-President J. T. Wilby, Esq., in the chair. Machine in use, society's; sound-boxes, H.M.V. No. 2 and Columbia. It appeared that the inventor's claims, in respect to the duration of time that the records will play, were fully justified, for it is clearly a great step forward for the gramophone, when one hears practically a complete movement of a symphony without the breaks that distract one so. Listening at home to that glorious reproduction of Beethoven's *5th Concerto* for pianoforte and orchestra, recently issued by the H.M.V. Company, one cannot help being impressed by the possibilities of having masterpieces of this description running straight away through—truly the gramophone is coming into its own. In reference to the recording of the World Records, from opinions gathered from critical members, it would seem that one or two of the items were not quite up to the standard of similar recordings of our leading companies, but the inventive genius of one so greatly interested in the evolution of things gramophonic as Mr. Pemberton-Billing, must very soon overcome this slight defect.

Items: *Morning, Noon, and Night in Vienna* (Suppé), Band of United Guards. Tonal qualities good, full, round and mellow, wood wind in particular. *Softly awakes my heart* (Saint-Saëns); *It's quiet down here* (Brahe), Dorothy Clark (contralto); *Slavonic Rhapsody* (Friedemann), Band of Air Force; *Devonshire Cream and Cider* (Sanderson); *A little prayer for me* (Russell); *Company Sergeant-Major* (Sanderson), Robert Carr (baritone); *Symphony in B Minor* (Unfinished) (Schubert), Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra. Here the reproduction appeared in patches to be very thin, in particular string tone of second movement. *Sink, Sink, Red Sun* (Del Riego); *Love's Coronation* (Aylward), Miss Margaret Wray (contralto). This was perhaps the best of the vocal items. Enunciation clear and tonal qualities pleasingly mellow. *Finlandia* (tone poem) (Sibelius), Band of Air Force.

Mr. Swallow was given a hearty vote of thanks for his extremely interesting contribution. The second portion of the entertainment consisted of a competition, the twelve items of which reached a very high level—mostly H.M.V., Columbia, and Vocalion

celebrity issues. The winning record, *La Partida* (Alvarez), sung by Galli-Curci, the property of Miss Hartley, one of our lady members, is a gem. An important announcement by the secretary to the effect that Dr. A. G. Tysoe, F.R.C.O., Leeds Parish Church, had honoured the Society by kindly accepting presidency for the coming session, was greeted with great applause. For information apply to H. Hainsworth, 9, Dorset Avenue, Harehills, Leeds.

B. McNATTY PALMER,
Hon. Recording Secretary.

SHEFFIELD GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY

OUR usual monthly meeting was held at headquarters on July 3rd, the programme taking the form of a selection of Mr. A. Harrison's records, the competition, and the new H.M.V. issues. Mr. Harrison, who kindly took the trouble to bring his own horn instrument, played for us fourteen items, notable amongst which were Tosti's *Good-bye*, Caruso; *Genevieve*, Clara Butt; *O Ruddier than the Cherry*, Harry Dearth; *Lolita* (Spanish Serenade), McCormack; Selections from the musical play *Mr. Manhattan*, Light Opera Company; also items by W. H. Squire, Thorpe Bates, the Coldstream and Grenadier Guards Bands, etc. The renderings of Caruso, Clara Butt, and Harry Dearth seemed to be as popular as any, and it may here be noted that the sound-box used was the U.S.A. Exhibition pattern fitted with a paper diaphragm, though, if the writer may be permitted to say so, it would probably have given a better account of itself had the adjustment been more carefully attended to. The hearty vote of thanks proposed by our chairman, Mr. Batty, was carried unanimously, and the competition was then proceeded with. On the present occasion orchestras only were eligible, the winning record being a selection from *The Girl in the Taxi* (Royal Court Orchestra), owned by Mr. Batchford. Second place was taken by Mr. Clegg with his record of the tuneful Mazurka from Delibes' *Coppelia* Ballet.

THOS. H. BROOKS,
Hon. Recording Secretary.

THE NORTH LONDON PHONOGRAPH AND GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY

THE month of August is admittedly the "dead end" of the talking-machine Society season. The attendance is bare, but bronzed. However, there is always "something doing" at "the North," and on Saturday, August 11th, our worthy financial secretary, Mr. E. H. Thomas, "put over" (excuse these inverted commas) a programme of all-round excellence by way of the society's Seymour gramophone, interpreted by the Vi-toneon sound-box, an ingenious form of reproducer immediately adaptable to phono or needle-cut records. Mr. L. Ivory proved an efficient chairman, and the following programme was enthusiastically received: (1) selection, *Manon*, Parts 1 and 2 (H.M.V.), De Groot and The Piccadilly Orch.; (2) tenor (a) *Ninetta*, (b) *Until* (Zono.), Sydney Coltham; (3) cello (a) *Andante*, (b) *Melodie* (Col.), W. H. Squire; (4) soprano (a) *Villanelle*, (b) *Softly Sighs* (Zono.), L'Incognita; (5) intermezzo, *The Jewels of the Madonna* (Col.), London Symphony Orch.; (6) violin, *Guitarre*, Op. 45, No. 2 (H.M.V.), Jascha Heifetz; (7) bass, *Little Michael John O'Shea* (H.M.V.), Harry Dearth. Interval. (8) flute (a) *Serenade*, (b) *Comin' Thro' the Rye* (Col.), Robert Murchie; (9) violin (a) *Canzonetta*, (b) *Rustle of Spring* (Zono.), Marjorie Hayward; (10) bass (a) *The Midnight Review*, (b) *Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind* (Col.), Norman Allin; (11) intermezzo, *Jasmine* (Zono.), Peerless Orchestra; (12) tenor, *Because* (Victor), Evan Williams; (13) selection, *Ruddigore*, Parts 1 and 2 (Col.), Grenadier Guards.

The first part of the programme was carried out through the agency of fibre needles, but the dimensions of our hall are altogether too capacious for that, which, under the ordinary acoustic conditions of a private apartment, is eminently satisfactory; therefore, the orthodox steel stylus was brought into play during the second part, to the general satisfaction. At the conclusion a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Thomas for having provided a most successful and not too classical entertainment.

WILLIAM J. ROBINS, Hon. Recording Secretary.

NOTE.—May I ask those Secretaries of Gramophone Societies who have not replied to my circular letter of July 12 to do so as soon as possible. Reports of meetings should reach this Office not later than the middle of each month.—EDITOR.

GRAMOPHONISTS of BLIND ALLEY

IS it really necessary to recommend, as "Z" recommended in his review of the New Wagner records, that gramophonists should indulge in soundbox "games"—that is, experiment with various makes of diaphragm in order to get the best reproduction possible? My own experience inclines me to believe that the average owner takes to such diversions as cheerfully as a fledgling takes to wing.

Now this type of activity is commendable only to a certain degree. General preoccupation with the scientific side of the business is bound to have a beneficial reaction upon the manufacturers, stimulating them to strive for the perfection in reproduction which we all want. But at the same time it has the melancholy effect of giving gramophony the status of a mere hobby with no higher function than fretwork or philately. It obscures the fact that in the highest sense the gramophone is not an end unto itself, but a humble stepping-stone to something infinitely greater—Music. And that is the factor generally overlooked.

There are too many gramophonists who direct every ounce of their critical faculty to estimating the exact degree of surface noise or blast that mars this or that record. Time and energy are wasted in vain attempts to diminish the limitations of the instrument, for the eternal question is not what the gramophone says but how it says it. These gramophonists of blind alley would hear Brünnhilde calling Siegmund to Valhalla, lubricator or screw-driver in hand.

I have described their attempts as vain. Those who make them will strenuously deny the charge, for one of their attributes is a fastidiousness which makes all kinds of subtle discriminations as to the effect of futile tinkering; but nine times out of ten the "improvements" of experimentalists mean absolutely nothing to him who regards the gramophone not as a medium for the study of clockwork or a branch of acoustics, but as an institution which is gradually bringing the supply of good music abreast of the demand. The experts of the manufacturing companies may be relied upon to do all that can be done in the direction of eliminating present defects; to the average amateur the scope for successful research is necessarily limited.

It would be unwise of him, of course, to neglect the few measures advisable to get the best out of his instrument, but these measures need occupy only a small part of his leisure. The rest will be devoted by the sensible owner to exploring the wonderful musical territories which are being opened up by the record catalogues.

Reproduction of inferior quality—such as *must*

be tolerated from time to time, whatever the progress in recording—is rarely an irremovable bar to the fulfilment of this mission. I have repeatedly found that persons with the biggest stock of genuine musical perception are least irritated by the foreign sounds that usually accompany those recorded. Though this may seem a paradox it is perfectly understandable, for surface noise and even more forbidding bugbears seldom intercept the core of musical thought on its way to the hearer. And in the case of great music, the might of the vital outline is sufficient to overwhelm all else. As long as the hearer realises *that*, he is blissfully oblivious to the needle scratch or the blast of a refractory sound wave. Later he may hear the actual performance with every contour clean cut and every harmony undefiled; but the second experience will merely confirm and reinforce the impressions he obtained from the first.

True there are some who hold that we profane a piece of music by tolerating any performance that departs in the smallest particular from the intentions of the score. Is not this the stupid attitude of people who fail to see the music for the notes? Take, for example, the old Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra records of *Parsifal* music. They abound in defects—nuance and detail lost in an undergrowth of mechanical noise; tone qualities occasionally contorted by some freak of recording; climaxes hopelessly blurred, etc. Obviously, this is a rendering which differs very materially from the normal and much more materially from the ideal. Now there are no other *Parsifal* discs available at present. Are we to purge our libraries of these on account of their faults? The musical purist and the reproduction fanatic will emphatically answer "Yes." But the beginner with ears to hear will intercede on behalf of the black sheep, for he knows that the records have given him and will give many others a truthful first glimpse of the mystic content of the music. The essential spirit of the whole is too colossal a factor to be distorted by technical imperfections. Misconceived interpretation, not a flawed presentation, is the factor most inimical to the correct understanding of a work.

To summarise, there is a tendency at present to give reproduction more attention than it deserves. The sooner it is generally acknowledged to be a subservient element, the better will the gramophone effect its great function—that of carrying the message of Bach, Beethoven, Wagner along the high roads instead of among the by-paths of life—a sphere to which circumstance has largely confined it in the past.

C. S. R.

MUSIC'S MISSION—I.

By Warren Monk

IN these articles I intend to offer some guidance in the understanding of music, and to attempt to clear away some of the silly conventions which prevent many people from being on terms of personal friendship with music. There is so much nonsense and humbug talked and written about music by professional musicians that music lovers, being made by the professionals to regard themselves as impotent neophytes, are chary of letting their enthusiasm and adoration for the most democratic and all-prevailing of the arts have full rein.

Music should be enjoyed as well as taught. The experiencing of music in itself affords an ideal form of recreation; for those who wish to become executants the more they indulge in aural saturation the more they will gain in prowess of interpretation. Listening to music is a communal occupation of a healthy kind. Nearly all of us lead helter-skelter lives that compel us to fortify ourselves with stimulants of various kinds. Although I am far from being a prohibitionist I do claim that more moral and physical stimulation (without any untoward after-effects) can be obtained from the orderly listening to a fine piece of music than from the imbibing of alcohol.

To be intimate with music is a great joy. But it requires cultivation.

I suppose Melody has a universal appeal. By Melody I mean tune and not tune-and-decorations (i.e., harmony). Music, as we know it to-day in Europe, is not more than 500 years old, and during that short space of time Melody has undergone many changes. Melody in that age of tremendous artistic activity in England round about the reign of Queen Elizabeth is different from Melody as poured forth by composers in our own century. For those who are approaching music, Handel (1685-1759) is the composer who should be studied first. He still enjoys world-wide renown. Handel may be regarded as the master of line-drawing in music. Melody is to the musician what drawing is to the painter. Harmony is colour in music; the musician's paint-box, in other words. Handel was a genius in melodic outline; his tunes are nearly always perfect. Let us examine his famous *Largo* (of which many gramophone records exist). This, to our ears hackneyed and sophisticated composition, is in its melody (minus trimmings in the way of effects added later by cheap-jacks) a masterpiece. I recommend a long study of this tune. The sentimental

appeal of the ornamentation (harps, organ, violins, etc.) must be ignored or else the study is useless. Note the unerring flow of the melody; its lovely rise and fall; its adventure, balance and completion; the perfection of its comprehensiveness; and so on. Do not associate the tune with churches, funerals, weddings, processions or any ceremony; merely "listen" impartially and allow the music as music to flood your mind and soul. I leave my readers with this one example of a popular piece in the hope that they will be spurred on to the consideration of other simple tunes of merit and real artistry. In future articles I will indicate for them other works for their consideration.

I turn now to the matter of books that should be read complementary to the recreational study of music. Books about music abound, but precious few are intelligible to the "plain man." Music is not a branch of mathematics or black magic. It is not an esoteric science. It is a thing of reality made by a few men for the enjoyment of all people. The common people (so beloved by Abraham Lincoln "because God made them") constantly hear the willow-like "high-brows" talk about music in a most frightening way. The *intelligensia* indulges in eternal comparisons between musicians and their music. "Handel only wrote tunes," "Wagner is a psychologist who expressed in music the social economics of Karl Marx," "Beethoven is dreary," "Mendelssohn, the sentimentalist," etc., etc. These brainy beings talk about music as though they were picking a cricket team with Bach as captain, Beethoven as vice-captain, Arthur Sullivan as wicket-keeper! Music is not a test-match; it is a personal and human phenomenon without physical or mental boundaries.

Therefore when reading about music care should be exercised in the choice of books. England proudly claims one man who has served well his fellows in providing them with books they can understand. I refer to Mr. Percy A. Scholes. Mr. Scholes has had a long and varied experience in catering for the musical needs of every class of society. He has studied the amateur and has found out what he needs. Hence he has written a series of delightful books that are as necessary to everyone as soap and water. Several of these books were reviewed in the August number of *The Gramophone*. The "Listener's Guide to Music" (Oxford Press), is the book recommended for those beginning to acquire a knowledge of music.

DAME CLARA BUTT AND H.M.V.

We have received the following communication from Dame Clara Butt-Rumford :—

COMPTON LODGE,
HARLEY ROAD,
HAMPSTEAD, N.W.3.

July 16th, 1923.

To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.

Dear Sir,

I would be obliged if you would give the following letter prominence in your paper :—

In their May supplement the Gramophone Co., Ltd., listed a record of mine, "Il Segreto." This record was made about twelve years ago and was never passed by me as fit for publication and in my opinion it is not so.

More recently the Gramophone Co. have listed in their July supplement a record by me, "Caro mio ben," which was one of the first records I made for that Company about sixteen years ago.

Announced as these records are among others in the Gramophone Co.'s monthly supplements, I feel that despite any reference to the date on which they were recorded, the greater proportion of the public may accept them as representing my present work.

It is eight years now since I made any records for the Gramophone Co., as during those eight years my services for new recordings have been exclusively retained by the Columbia Gramophone Co., Ltd., whose records of mine I consider are the best reproductions of my voice.

I desire the general public and your readers in particular to understand that the above-mentioned records are issued at this time without my consent, and I would ask my public not to judge me by these records.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) CLARA BUTT-RUMFORD.

With reference to this statement we hasten, in justice to Dame Clara Butt-Rumford, to say that our reviewer was not aware of these facts when he judged the record of *Il Segreto* (No. 2, p. 42); and, in justice to H. M. V., to reprint the note added in their May Supplement (p. 4). "Special interest attaches to this record, as it was made by Dame Clara Butt in Germany before the War, and the 'master' record, which was detained by the German authorities, has only recently been handed over to us." We do not seem to have received the record of *Caro mio ben* for review.

The question raised is of importance to the buying public as well as to artists and recording companies; and without in any way prejudicing our right to criticise records sent to us, irrespectively of the history of their production, we should be interested to hear of other cases similar to that of Dame Clara Butt-Rumford.

THE SEVENTH SYMPHONY

JUST as we go to press we receive the five double-sided records of Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* divided into nine parts and played by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner (Col. L.1480—1484, blue label). Although we cannot flatter ourselves that we have had any influence in obtaining so welcome an addition to the library, the prayers of an honest man avail much, and we are as grateful to the Columbia Company as if these records were a direct answer to our repeated supplications. A first trial suggests that a feast is in store for us, but we withhold all criticisms till our next issue, and will merely add that the tenth side (1484) is occupied by Weingartner's *Dance of the Sprites* from the incidental music to *The Tempest*.

We are already indebted to the Columbia Company for the *Eroica* Symphony, published not very long ago, and as the H.M.V. have supplied the Fifth, we now turn to the Vocalion for the Sixth or even the Ninth! The more we are given the more we want.

ANSWER TO MR. LEGGE

(To the Editor, THE GRAMOPHONE).

DEAR SIR,—Replying to your correspondent, Mr. Robin H. Legge, may I point out that his surprising retort to me is a most remarkable mixture of error, misapprehension and innuendo. Legitimate criticism, however vigorously worded, is one thing, but sheer distortion of fact is quite another.

In regard to "cloudy condition," it seems to me that the boot is on the other Legge, as my communication was as clear as daylight and in any case why should I be held responsible for Mr. Legge's ignorance on the subject of gramophone societies? Moreover, he has apparently confused me with another correspondent, as he asks why I did not tell him so (*i.e.*, about the functions of gramophone societies) in the first report. For the very obvious reason that I never wrote any first report, and the report in the second number (the only one written by me) was, as I expressly stated, written to oblige a musical friend.

I cannot, for the life of me, see anything reprehensible in defending the cult of the gramophone society, but to make my own position plain, let me definitely state that Mr. Legge has never, as he implies, either pointed out any fault of mine, real or imagined, or "gone considerably out of his way" to bring me before a very large public—whatever that may mean. He has no jurisdiction whatever over anything I have ever written, so that it rests with him now to explain his strange statements.

In regard to the final phrase of his letter, I leave that at its face value, which is nil, merely remarking that it impels one to inquire, in all innocence, who is the editor of this magazine, Mr. Robin H. Legge or Compton Mackenzie?

With (or without) the gracious permission of Mr. Legge, I again beg to sign myself,

Sincerely yours,

W. B. P.

REVIEW OF RECORDS

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D.713-717.—Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique" Symphony (No. 6 in B Minor, Op. 74), recorded by **The Royal Albert Hall Orchestra**, conducted by **Sir Landon Ronald**. Five double-sided Black Label records, 37s. 6d.

Perhaps the best known, most widely appreciated of all symphonies—in spite of the Editor's autobiographical confessions—the *Pathétique* deserved to be fully recorded (only one or two repeats in the Second Movement are omitted) under the best auspices. This has been done. H.M.V., Sir Landon Ronald and his Orchestra must be thanked for the success of their combined enterprise. The recording is very fine, perhaps especially in the last movement, and Sir Landon Ronald does his best not to emphasise the structural inequalities of this masterpiece of national emotionalism. Analytically speaking, I find the first movement, divided into four parts for recording, the most interesting, for in it still lurk traces of the old sonata form. Suggestions of the first subject are contained in the short mournful introduction, which is stimulated into neurotic activity in the *Allegro non troppo* and exploits itself till a small climax is reached. This leads to the slow section containing the second subject in two parts, and here the lyrical style is in contrast with the austerity of the previous section. The second subject, except for several embellishments, can hardly be said to develop to any great extent: but it has a beautiful conclusion which leads to the *Allegro vivo*, in which the colour of the first subject reappears, tinging the emotional climax of the movement. The *Andante* again is now reached, and the movement passes peacefully away.

The next movement, the most popular of all, with its racy melody which is so easy to memorise, makes a straightforward appeal to the emotions. The omission in the recording of the first repeat is wise, for though the tune is beautiful the composer was evidently among its most fervent admirers. Hypercritically one may say that here the recording is a little less satisfying than in the other records. The delightful octave figures with which in parts the melody is accompanied are rather lost, and with them something of its springiness, while the characteristic drum-beats of the minor section are, while inaudible except with the loudest needle.

The *Allegro molto vivace* retains some of the spirit of the old Scherzo. There is some pothouse wit here, and sometimes it suggests to me a revolt of lions and other beasts, and also the Finale of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. There is a fine march theme which perhaps indicates the submission of the above beasts and their entry into the Ark.

The last movement requires no elucidation or comment.

FRANCIS HELPS.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D.718 and 719.—Beethoven's *Sonata in C Sharp Minor, Op. 27, No. 2 (The Moonlight Sonata)*, and Liszt's *Étude de Concert in D Flat, No. 3*. Played by **Frederic Lamond** (Pianoforte), 15s.

This also is a matter for thanks and congratulation to H.M.V. Mr. Lamond is generally recognised as the supreme exponent of Beethoven's pianoforte works, and his stately and strict interpretation of the first movement may be taken as setting a standard for the tempo, which was not definitely given by the composer and is often taken too fast by players. Although he is not a consistently massive player, I assume that the muffled tone at the beginning of this first movement is due to the recording rather than to his own fault. The *Allegretto* and the *Presto Agitato* leave nothing to be desired, while for those who enjoy brilliance of technique there is also the Liszt *Étude de Concert* on the fourth side. Clearly these are records to be added to every library.

FRANCIS HELPS.

VOCALION.—A.0196.—**Virgilio Lazzari** (Bass): *La Calunnia è un Venticello* from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Rossini), 8s.

This is Signor Lazzari's first record, and it is one that both he and the Vocalion company have reason to be proud of. He has an exquisite voice and is certainly one of the finest basses now singing. *La calunnia* was written by Rossini rather too high for a *basso profundo*, and Signor Lazzari is a typical *basso profundo*. Like all basses except those that have *baritonale* voices he transposes the song a tone lower. Even so, there is one place where it is a trifle too high, and the voice, suddenly lacking in quality,

seems to lose its support. The recording is very good and the record can strongly be recommended, especially as first-rate bass records are by no means common.

VELVET FACE.—564.—**London Light Orchestra**, conducted by **Eugene Craft: Pagliacci Selections** (Leoncavallo), 5s. 6d.; 565.—**Daly's Theatre Orchestra**, conducted by **Arthur Wood: Merry Widow Selections** (Lehar), 5s. 6d.

These are two excellent examples of the sort of thing that needs doing and that the Edison-Bell company does particularly well. The music is easy to understand and very pleasing. It is well fitted for being played by small orchestras which do not involve great financial responsibilities nor cause great technical difficulties in the reproduction. It is no doubt for this reason that the records can be sold at such a low price.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—7-52224.—**Titta Ruffo** (Baritone): *Quand'ero paggio*, from *Falstaff* (Verdi), 5s. 6d.

Titta Ruffo has, I believe, never been a popular singer with the English. Probably he is not "gentlemanly" enough. Indeed I have heard it said that "he sings like a butcher." I wish my butcher sang like that. The fact is that the English do not much more than tolerate singing. They have no such passion for it as possesses the Italians. Titta Ruffo has such a glorious voice that it is easy for a lover of singing to forgive him, what one must admit needs forgiveness, his tendency to bellow. It is after all such an agreeable bellow. In this particular song he does not bellow at all and gives a very good interpretation of Falstaff's famous song. All I have to complain about is the shortness of the record. Surely even a 10-inch disc would have held another short number. Five-and-sixpence is a lot to pay for what only seems a few minutes' singing.

VOCALION.—C.01095.—**Elena Gerhardt** (Soprano): *Der Erlkönig* (Schubert), 7s. 6d.

Elena Gerhardt continues her exquisite series of *lieder*. The *Erlkönig* is very dramatic, and is evidently rather a strain on the voice. On the whole it is, I think, less successful on the gramophone than the *Nussbaum*, but the song is a universal favourite, and the record can thoroughly be recommended.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—2-052233.—**Gigli** (Tenor): *Un di all'azzurro spazio guardai*, from *Andrea Chénier* (Giordano), 7s. 6d.

Signor Gigli has one of the most beautiful lyrical tenor voices in the world; he has also an extremely beautiful Italian pronunciation. *Andrea Chénier* is a trying opera for anyone to sing, and it is too dramatic for Signor Gigli's eminently lyrical voice. There are beautiful passages in this record, but on the whole it cannot be considered one of his best. The recording is good, but it is better not to use too loud a needle.

VOCALION.—D.02101.—**The London String Quartet: Quartet in E Minor (Aus meinem Leben)** (Smetana), 7s. 6d.

The completion of this quartet, the first two movements of which appeared in June, is very welcome. It has been extensively and rather oddly cut. Neither the London String Quartet nor the Vocalion company are to be blamed for this, however. When the public demands its chamber music uncut and proves the genuineness of its demand by buying from four to eight double-sided records of one piece, doubtless the recording companies will not be behindhand. The playing of the London String Quartet is good without being exactly inspired. The recording is excellent, and the company are to be commended for adding another important piece of chamber music to the meagre list of those available for the gramophone.

VOCALION.—D.02100.—**Albert Sammons** (Violin): *Intermezzo* (Sammons); *Danse Orientale* (Rimsky-Korsakoff-Kreisler), 7s. 6d.

Mr. Sammons is an extremely interesting violin player, but in these days when other interesting violin players like Kreisler and Heifetz confine their attention entirely to trifles, Mr. Sammons might produce records we should prefer to theirs if he would only play music which we should prefer to the music they play. Serious music can bear not to be played quite so "interestingly" as these empty little things. As it is, he plays these pieces adequately, and his tone is much better than is usual on his discs.

VELVET FACE.—561.—Doris Woodall (Contralto): *Softly awakes my heart and Fair Spring is returning, from Samson and Delilah* (Saint Saëns), 5s. 6d.

Lovers of *Samson et Delila* will find this a good record. Miss Doris Woodall's voice is agreeable compared to most English contraltos, but she is not entirely free from the English "hoot."

VELVET FACE.—1076.—Michael Zacharewitsch (Violin): *Waltz in A Major* (Brahms); *Rondino* (Beethoven), 3s. 6d.

I do not much like Mr. Zacharewitsch's playing. His rhythm, especially in the Brahms waltz, is wooden, and he has a decided tendency to play out of tune. It is a gallant enterprise to give us celebrity records on a 10-inch double-sided disc for 3s. 6d., and I hope the company will give us others.

VELVET FACE.—560.—Band of H.M. Scots Guards (Bandmaster, Lieut. F. W. Wood): *Zampa Overture* (Hérold), 5s. 6d.

A good military band record of an old favourite.

JAMES CASKETT.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—E.296 (10-inch, 5s. 6d.).—Carmen Hill (Mezzo-Soprano): *The Oxen*; *Gipsies* (Graham Peel).

Two undistinguished songs not worthy of Miss Carmen Hill. She sings them with her usual grace and charm.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—B.1608 (10-inch, 4s.).—Lloyd Garrett: *My Wayside Rose* (Erwin); *Romany Love* (Zamecnik).

Two well-known songs sung in the usual way.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—C.1104 (12-inch, 6s.).—Mayfair Orchestra, conducted by G. W. Byng: *Brighter London*.

A very fine record.

VOCALION.—M.1143 (10-inch, 3s. 6d.).—Norman Hardy (Tenor): *You and I and Love* (Sinclair); *Maureen* (Maitland). With orchestral accompaniment.

VOCALION.—M.1145 (10-inch, 3s. 6d.).—Helen Clark and Elliot Shaw: *I'm just a little blue*. Arthur Fields (Comedian): *Carolina in the Morning*.

Two light and pleasant records.

VOCALION.—M.1144 (10-inch, 3s. 6d.).—Sybil Fagan (Whistler): *The Bird at the Waterfall*; *April Sighs*.

This is a very charming record. The bird-like quality of Miss Fagan's whistle is wonderfully reproduced.

VOCALION.—X.9188 (10-inch, 4s.).—Arthur Burns (Tenor): *The Old Refrain* (Kreisler-Mattullah); *Only a Smile* (Zamecnik-Edson).

Arthur Burns wastes his very attractive tenor voice on two drivelling songs.

ZONOPHONE.—Serial 2354 (10-inch, 3s.).—Denis O'Neill: *Just a Mother's Song at Twilight*. Denis O'Neill and Pat Thayer: *Zim Zula Bim Bim*.

The frank vulgarity of the latter is vastly preferable to the slush of the Mother's Song at Twilight.

ZONOPHONE.—Serial 2347.—Leonard Hubbard: *Granny's Song at Twilight*; *Angelus*.

The Zonophone gives us Granny's Song at Twilight as well as Mother's, and it is hard to say which is the more depressing, but perhaps Mother's wins the day. Granny's is sung by Mr. Leonard Hubbard, who is worthy of better things.

ZONOPHONE.—Serial 2348 (10-inch, 3s.).—Leonard Hubbard: *Carolina in the Morning*; *Sheba*.

Mr. Hubbard sings these popular songs very well.

ZONOPHONE.—Serial 2350 (10-inch, 4s.).—Max Darewski: *Lovin' Sam*; *Monkey Blues*.

Mr. Darewski plays with his usual delicious deftness and swing. These piano solos are as "danceable" as any jazz band.

ZONOPHONE.—Serial 2346 (10-inch, 3s.).—Frank Webster: *Love Went a'Riding* (F. Bridge); *Onaway, awake Beloved* (Cowan).

Love Went a'Riding is a fine song with a Valkyrie rhythm, sung with imagination by Mr. Frank Webster.

ZONOPHONE.—Serial 2352 (10-inch, 3s.).—Elsie Southgate: *One Little Hour*; *Mizpah*.

Sentimental pieces with organ accompaniment.

ZONOPHONE.—Serial 2353 (10-inch, 3s.).—The Dorian Singers: *Pickaninny's Lullaby*; *Come to me now my own*.

Sung with taste by a male quartet.

ZONOPHONE.—Serial 2351 (10-inch, 3s.).—Albert Whelan: *Ain't Love Grand*; *Down at my Hotel*.

Two of Mr. Whelan's characteristic songs.

PATHE.—5759 (10-inch, 3s.).—Pathé Military Band: *Martha Overture* (Flotow), *Parts 1 and 2*.

PATHE.—1680 (10-inch, 3s.).—Pathé Military Band: *Namur March* (Richards); *Evening Bells* (Rimmer). Average band pieces played with gusto.

PATHE.—5758.—Lamoureux Orchestra: *Alborada "Capriccio Espagnol"* (Korsakow); *Scherzo* (Lalo). Interesting music well rendered.

PATHE.—1689 (10-inch, 3s.).—Max Terr and his Orchestra: *Batavia* (Fox-trot) from *The Cousin from Nowhere*; *Magical Moon* (Waltz) from *The Cousin from Nowhere*.

PATHE.—1686.—Cathedral Male Quartet: *Abide with Me*; *The Church's One Foundation*.

For those who enjoy these hymns we recommend this simple unaffected rendering.

PATHE.—5760.—John Thorne: *Rouse Up*; *The Song of the Clock*.

It was interesting to compare this with the needle-cut version (*Actuelle* 15134, 4s. 6d.), and the vote went to the steel needle for tone.

ACTUELLE.—15136.—Bohemian Girl: *Parts 1 and 2*.

A fine record of this gay music.

F. SHARP.

DANCE RECORDS

To listen in cold blood to a succession of dance records is fair neither to the records nor to the reviewer. The following have all been danced to, and a dancing expert has given her valuable opinion on their merits. They have been judged under the best possible auspices, having been played on a Kestrophone, a very satisfying instrument for all music, with a Chromic needle, and most of them have been played twice at least.

Paul Whiteman gives us *Chansonette*, and *Tell me with a Melody* (H.M.V. 16584; 4/-) of which the latter is perhaps the more attractive, the bass, or baritone, saxophone moving one almost to tears when it takes up the melody. He also gives the languid *Oriental*, in which the aria from *Samson and Delilah*, *Softly awakes my heart*, at last finds its true level. On the other side is *Liza*, done by Zez Confrey and his orchestra (H.M.V. B.1660; 4/-).

Snakes Hips is a jolly fox-trot well recorded by H.M.V. (B.1663; 4/-) and *Actuelle* (10487; 3/-). H.M.V. has an unusually gentle and musical thing on the other side, *Who's sorry now?* These are played by the Memphis Five. *Actuelle* has the famous *Yes, we have no bananas*. So both records are good investments.

The dancing expert has tried some of the records in her classes, and selects the following for easy rhythm:

Les Nuits des Bois, fox-trot (Vocalion M.1150; 3/6), which has *La Violette*, tango fox-trot, on the other side.

Sweet One (H.M.V. B.1659; 4/-), done by Paul Whiteman's Orchestra, with *By the Shalimar* on the other side. This also gets good marks for simple rhythm. The latter is also played by Albert Short Orchestra (Vocalion M. 1146; 3/6), and has *Batavia* on the other side.

The experienced fox-trotter already knows *Gliding*, which has some clever syncopation, and is well recorded by Zonophone (Serial 2357; 3/-). Talking of syncopation, I cannot find in any catalogue records of Cole Porter's marvellous syncopated music. I have not any American catalogues by me, but I suppose some recording company has got him on their list. I cannot understand why we are not given anything by this young master of rag-time.

That naughty Waltz and *Hawaiian Smiles* are given on the Ukalele by Ferrara and Franchini (Vocalion X.9190; 4/-). These langorous strains are apt to become tedious, and, since some one said they reminded him of a sick dog, they have lost their fascination. But their voluptuous appeal is very strong, and these two numbers can be recommended to those who still enjoy it.

Good records are all the following:

Don't be too sure and *Down among the sleepy hills of Tennessee* (Vocalion M.1149; 3/6) by Selwin's Dance Orchestra. *Ose Anna* and *He Marie* (Vocalion M.1151; 3/6) by Montmartre Dance Orchestra. *Down in sweetheart town*, fox-trot, and *Broken-hearted Melody*, waltz (Vocalion M.1147; 3/6). *Little Rover* and *Lost*, by Parker's Western Melody Boys (Pathé 1690; 3/-).

F. SHARP.

CORRESPONDENCE

(To the Editor, THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I offer you my sincerest congratulations and best wishes for the future in regard to your very excellent gramophone periodical. The frankness, the enthusiasm, and the breadth of view of your contributors make the paper a joy to read and a pleasure to look forward to at the beginning of each month.

The mysterious person "Z." is my particular favourite because, with one or two exceptions, his tastes are mine exactly. The exceptions are his fancy for coloratura arias and his antipathy for modern music; I cannot abide the former, and I can appreciate a good deal of the latter. Anyway, if the modern composers are somewhat too "representational" in their ideas sometimes, it is always a keen pleasure to me to study their very ingenious orchestration, and if there be little real emotional content in some of their works the same may be said of the grand flamboyant airs of Italian Opera. Coloratura vocalism, however excellent, is but a mechanical perfection. Charming, but soulless. How much more inspiring is a good *lieder* singer, and how much more rare!

I hope you will continue to hammer into the heads of the Recording Companies the need for more and more of the good old classics. Some things that we must have are as follows:

(1) The *Don Giovanni Overture*, the *Kleine Nachtmusik* (glad to see Brett Young wants this, too), and a symphony by Mozart (say the G Minor).

(2) A new record of the *Leonora No. 3 Overture*, the *Fidelio Overture*, the *Seventh Symphony* and one of the later quartets by Beethoven, and a good string trio by the same.

(3) In these days of resurrection or renaissance among the older composers why is Gluck so much overlooked? We want to have recorded one of his overtures—the *Alceste* or *Iphigenia in Tauris*—and a ballet suite from, say, *Orpheus*. This music, like that of Mozart and Purcell (from whose works we should have an orchestral suite), needs only a small orchestra and is, therefore, peculiarly adapted for recording purposes.

(4) We should also have an Elgar Symphony, one or two more instalments of the *Planets*, César Franck's D Minor Symphony, and a good violin solo of the Andante from Mendelssohn's Concerto—I am surprised that neither Kreisler nor Heifetz have yet done this. There is no good record of it.

Frank Swinnerton's article in your No. 3 is excellent. I might add to it one other educational use of the gramophone—that of affording facilities for comparing the effect of one composer on another. For example, play Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel* or *Don Juan* and then put on Holst's *Jupiter*, and note the marked Straussian colouring, especially in the crescendi. Note also the similarity between the last half of the fourth movement of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique Symphony* and the ending of the *Funeral March* of the *Eroica*; and how the *Moonlight Sonata* is used in Part 3 of Franck's *Variations Symphoniques* recently recorded by H.M.V., also how Franck uses in these variations the fundamental theme of his Sonata for violin and piano.

These are interesting things that often escape the notice of the ordinary concert-goer. . . . I am glad to notice your enthusiasm for chamber music records. Please keep on demanding complete recordings. I wonder, are no more Lencr records to be issued? It would be a pity if this were so.

It is a good thought to give us those supplements of the words of songs. It would be a great help if you could possibly in one or two supplements give the portions of the libretti (as used by the Brit. Nat. Opera Co.) necessary to follow the "Ring" records recently issued by H.M.V. . . . Altogether a most valuable and interesting periodical, to which I wish the success it deserves.

Yours sincerely,

8, Pembroke Road, Dublin.

J. MEEK.

[I quite agree with our correspondent that it is high time we had the *Don Giovanni Overture* and, as I have already said, the *Queen of the Night* music. I am trying at the moment to get from Germany records of the Overture (3-40539-40), and also of the *Queen of the Night* music, of which there is one record by Frieda Hempel (043185) in the German H.M.V. list, and a double-sided record by Irene Eden (B.24019-20). A friend of mine tells me that the Hempel record is splendid. I fancy that we shall soon get the *Seventh Symphony* of Beethoven in England; but that is obtainable now in three double-sided discs conducted by Albert Coates, in the French H.M.V. list (W.437-439). If the Entente is still in being by the time this appears in print, it might

be worth our correspondent's while to order these, though I cannot pretend that the records are first class, and the symphony is badly cut. The *Third Leonora Overture* (H.M.V. 145-146) is not in the first rank as a piece of recording, but I think it is good enough to go on with as long as there is so much music of which we have no records at all. *Fidelio* is entirely neglected by our English companies, but the German list contains five of the songs, though not the overture, which I cannot trace anywhere. Ah, yes, would that we did have those later quartets of Beethoven, from the whole of which we have only the Fugue from the *Quartet in C Major*, a very fine record by the Flonzaley Quartet (H.M.V. 08079). Perhaps if my proposed society becomes a *fait accompli* we shall have some of those later quartets.

I cordially agree with our correspondent in pleading for something from Gluck, and it is a pity that apparently we do not possess in England a small orchestra as brilliant as Toscanini's at Milan, all the records of which I possess. In my opinion they are the best orchestral records in existence. They are circulated both in America and Italy, and include two movements from Mozart Symphonies that are perfectly exquisite (3-0596, 3-0595). I hear rumours of the *Jupiter Symphony*'s being done in England, but I have no certain information yet. Personally I can get along without an Elgar Symphony for the moment, and I don't think that Elgar enthusiasts have much to complain of. I should say that he was better represented on records than any composer. I have also heard rumours of César Franck's glorious symphony being done. I only hope that for once rumour does not lie. I came across the Mendelssohn *Concerto* in the Spanish H.M.V. list, and I am trying to get hold of it. It does not "smell" good in the catalogue.

Why Kreisler or Heifetz choose the music they do is to me as great a riddle as life itself. Ysaye plays brilliantly the Finale of that Mendelssohn *Concerto* (Col. 7108).

Personally I would willingly do without any more movements from the *Planets* for the rest of my life, if I could have only one movement of a Brahms' Symphony; but the recording companies seem to exist under a delusion that Brahms wrote nothing but Hungarian dances. Still, we must not grumble too much, because I really think that we may say now that every month gives us something that we want.—C. M.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Correspondence for use on this page is invited, either in the form of queries, which we will endeavour to answer, or in the form of comments upon previous queries. Brevity is much appreciated.)

G. B. P. (Birmingham).—" . . . I shall be particularly glad to have some information as to the Astra, Sonat and Lenthall sound-boxes. My own instrument is a Sonora, and I am rather surprised that no mention is made of this beautifully mellow-toned gramophone. . . . Some opinion as to the 'World' records (which last for 20 minutes or more a side), and the controller would also be useful . . ." The only test that we have made of the World Records was not satisfactory, and we think that the invention is capable of improvement before it achieves its object, which is clearly admirable. We hope to deal with the Sonora in a future number.

A. T. G. (Malvern).—"May I welcome the GRAMOPHONE? I hope it will be a continuing success. It seems to me just what gramophoners want or ought to. I would like to find in its pages, besides what you are giving us: First. Practical advice of any and every description about the care and use of the instrument, the needles and the records. For instance, is it a fact that old records ought not to be kept flat? How often ought the machinery to be oiled and where. We all begin as novices and what may seem mere trivialities to the expert are not so to us. Secondly. Could you state what records are complete, and if they are cut, where? It is very difficult for unmusical people to follow a cut score on the gramophone. Thirdly. You might give us analytical articles such as Scholes gave in the *Observer* on the Siegfried March, in which he described the instrumentation most fully." You would probably find much to interest you in a little book called "Up-to-date Gramophone Tips," written and published by Capt. H. T. Barnett, M.I.E.E., 12, Whittington Chambers, Portsmouth (1/-). Your second suggestion opens a very large field, but, within limits, we attempt to indicate the cuts in records noticed. We hope shortly to start a series of analytical articles on new records of orchestral and chamber music.

Miss E. T. (Anglesey).—"You mention in your very interesting and much needed new Magazine, the GRAMOPHONE, that the Paderevski record, *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 10*, and other piano records can be improved by the use of certain sound-boxes and needles. Would you mind telling me which you consider the best, as I am disappointed with the clanging sound of the piano in mine? My Gramophone is H.M.V. Table Grand, Exhibition Sound-box. . . ." We recommend the Ultone sound-box with sympathetic chromic needles for piano records. But as regards the Paderevski record in question, see the remarks in the "Quarterly Review" on p. 51 of our August issue.

R. M. (London, S.W. 6).—"In the Supplement to the GRAMOPHONE I notice there are records made by the Fonotopia Company. I should be very much obliged if you would publish their present address, as I want to buy their discs *Serenade* and *Souvenir of Drdla*, played by Kubelik." Fonotopia records can be obtained from the Gramophone Exchange, 29-31, New Oxford Street, London, W.C. 2.

J. H. D. (Manchester).—"Could you give me or tell me where I could get the words of Handel's *Largo*, sung by Caruso for H.M.V. record?" Lately published by Messrs. Augener, Ltd., 18, Great Marlborough Street, London, W. 1.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

RECORDS.—H.M.V., 15; Vocalion, 17; Pathé Frères, 8 Actuelle, 7 Black Scroll; J. E. Hough, Ltd., 8 Velvet Face; Zonophone, 16.

SOUND-BOXES.—Pathé Frères, one small universal sound-box; Messrs. Ashley, one Pelham sound-box (5/-); J. Barstow, one Bastone Diaphragm (3/-).

BOOKS.—*The Art of the Prima Donna*, by F. Martens. (Messrs. D. Appleton & Co.), 12/6 net. *Melody Making*, by Sir Walford Davies, Mus.Doc., LL.D., etc. (The Gramophone Co., Ltd.), 1/- net. *Up-to-Date Gramophone Tips*, by Capt. H. T. Barnett, M.I.E.E. (12, Whittington Chambers, Portsmouth), 1/-.

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